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**Partnership to Promote March 2012 as Problem Gambling  
Awareness Month in New Jersey**  
***National Problem Gambling Awareness Week Observed March 4 -10***

ATLANTIC CITY — State gaming regulators and treatment professionals again have joined forces to increase problem gambling awareness. Leading the effort, Governor Chris Christie issued a Proclamation recognizing March 2012 as Problem Gambling Awareness Month with National Problem Gambling Awareness Week observed March 4 – 10, 2012 and urges all New Jersey residents to help spread the word that help is available for problem gamblers and their families. The theme of this year's campaign is "Anyone, Anywhere, Anytime can be Affected by Problem Gambling."

"Like other forms of addiction, compulsive gambling can destroy lives, undermine families, and even lead to criminal behavior," said New Jersey Attorney General Jeffrey S. Chiesa. "It is important that we take this month to increase awareness of this problem and encourage compulsive gamblers to seek help."

The Division of Gaming Enforcement and the Casino Control Commission have been working closely with the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey for years to increase awareness about problem gambling. In conjunction with support groups and educational programs, New Jersey's Self-Exclusion Program offers individuals a tool to eliminate the financial lure of casino slot machines and table games.

"We take our responsibility very seriously when it comes to addressing compulsive gambling through the Self-Exclusion Program," said Director of Gaming Enforcement David Rebuck. "We encourage anyone who has a problem controlling their betting habits to reach out for help and information on the self-exclusion program and treatment programs available in New Jersey."

New Jersey's Self-Exclusion Program was started by the Casino Control Commission in 2001. Currently, there are 1,213 persons on the self-exclusion list. A person can sign up for a minimum of one year, five years, or for life. When a person signs up for self-exclusion, the

casinos must stop marketing to them, remove them from any mailing lists and stop offering complimentary goods or services, credit or check cashing privileges. If a person on the list decides to gamble anyway, they will not be able to collect any winnings or recover any losses. Additionally, if a casino violates the law, any money from a self-excluded individual can be forfeited to the State and the casino can face other penalties.

“This way there is no financial incentive for a self-excluded gambler to come back into a casino or for a casino to try to lure someone on this list back to the tables or slot machines,” said Linda Kassekert, Chair of the Casino Control Commission. “If you have a gambling problem, neither the casinos nor the regulators want to see you gambling here. We want to see you get the help you need instead, and that includes treatment programs and self-exclusion,” she added.

Donald Weinbaum, Executive Director for the Council of Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, said, “Self-Exclusion is a valuable tool for the problem gambler in the effort to stop gambling and can be a first step toward recovery. Increased accessibility to community recovery groups and programs throughout the State will assist compulsive gamblers to obtain the additional help and supports they may need to address their addiction.”

“We have met with Executive Director Weinbaum and have assured him of the Division’s commitment to coordinate training and increase community locations for the self-exclusion program in order to make it more accessible to those who seek help,” said Rebuck.

Anyone interested in signing up for the self-exclusion program can go to the New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement offices at either Tennessee Avenue and the Boardwalk, Atlantic City, or 140 East Front Street, Trenton. When you complete the necessary paperwork, you will be required to provide picture identification and you will be photographed. For more information, please visit the Division’s website at [www.nidge.org](http://www.nidge.org).

Help is available 24 hrs a day/7 days a week by calling 1-800-GAMBLER. Information can also be downloaded and a live chat is available during daytime hours at [www.800gambler.org](http://www.800gambler.org).

Money that is received by the State as part of settlement agreements or that is forfeited to the State from patrons on the self-exclusion list is directed, in part, to the Casino Revenue Fund, which supports compulsive gambling treatment and education programs and programs that benefit the State’s senior citizens and persons with disabilities. Other monies from such settlements go directly to Council of Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey.

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